

Miss Rashleigh Reviews City History At Kiwanis

June 4, 1946.

Incidents of Carbondale's past—its people, its tragedies, its comedies, its progress—were recalled vividly for the Kiwanis club at its weekly dinner meeting Tuesday night in Durfee Parish house by Miss Alice Voyle Rashleigh, former school teacher and principal and now city historian.

Miss Rashleigh was introduced by her former schoolmate Ddight L. Crane. They studied under Professor Hockenberry at old No. 1. Alfred L. Wells was in charge of the program.

The club accepted an invitation from Max Levine, program chairman of Pioneer Lodge, B'nai B'rith, to attend a meeting of the lodge on June 26 at 8:15 p. m. Mr. Levine took the opportunity to thank George E. Pizer, member of the club, for kindnesses Mr. Pizer had extended to him over a long period of years.

Norbert Mayer, of the Veterans Administration, told the club in a brief talk that many discharged GI's are failing to take advantage of all benefits available to them and urged that Kiwanians advise them to visit the VA office to obtain information. Elwood Allan and Albert Winter of Jermyn, Boy Scout council officials, spoke briefly on Scout work in connection with the organization of the new Kiwanis troop here. William Vaughn, Archbald, spoke on behalf of the Archbald Enterprise Association bond selling campaign.

President Carl H. Ackemann conducted the meeting and a meeting of the board of directors after the session.

The text of Miss Rashleigh's talk follows:

Miss Rashleigh Talk

"Fellow Citizens:

"Dwight and I were in High at the same time, but I, being older, 'shot out' ahead of him. He was the brightest boy in school and a good boy, too. The years have proven his worth—a good churchman, a good citizen—a good friend.

"I have addressed you as 'Fellow Citizens'—words that have a deep meaning. You men of the Kiwanis club are doing things to keep Carbondale in the front line, you in

your everyday work, while I, though no longer a teacher, am watching my boys and girls growing up, wondering how many seeds have taken root.

"Yes, children had their lessons to learn but often when some youngster couldn't grasp certain facts, the thought came to my mind—maybe he can't learn that but perhaps I can teach him to be a good citizen, always respecting the rights of others—so, for 52 years—that was my main objective.

"I have been asked to reminisce. This is a hard task, even though at 9 p. m. I will have been on the earth 75 years, 9 months and 6 days. I arrived at 9 p. m. in a thunderstorm and I've been in one ever since, tinged here and there with great happiness, and, like the Dodgers—never a dull moment, but this is only my fourth public appearance. I hesitated when Mr. Wells asked me to speak to you, but to be honest with you I just couldn't resist talking to such a swell bunch of men.

Tommy Voyle Grandfather

"I can't avoid being personal because Tommy Voyle, my grandfather became an active part of this city from the moment he landed here and with that background, from my early youth, I learned to love the old town. It gave me a living for 52 years and the best dividend ever paid—the love of children and the friendship of their parents and that after being out of contact for six years. And John Marshall is still 'my school.'

"CARBONDALE is the name. March 15, 1831, is the date to remember. It's the date of the incorporation of the city by special act of legislature. Gov. Johnston signing the charter. Carbondale is the fourth oldest city in the Keystone State and the oldest in the coal regions. It had its charter 15 years before Scranton and 20 years before Wilkes-Barre. That's something!

"Often it was said, 'Queer place to locate a town.' It was an almost impenetrable wilderness, with wolves howling at night and foxes

as thick as grasshoppers, but these men were endowed with stick-to-it-iveness, a qualification needed by the youth of today.

"Carbondale has had its 95th birthday and my home at 36 River street is 96 years old. The first mayor was James Archbald. The first house—an old log tavern erected quite near us, near the present D. & H. station.

"Uriah Williams and Hiram Frisbie lived in this house, boarding the miners. Salmon Lathrope, a contractor for the D. & H., was the next occupant.

Wurts Brothers Arrive

"William Wurts and his brother Maurice arrived in 1823—found the 'blockstone'—our coal. Miners came—Welsh and Irish—and the southern part of the village was known as Welsh hill, and Shanty Hill was on the west side, where the Irish miners settled.

"A day or two ago I met an old friend and on asking her where she lived now, the reply was 'on Shanty Hill—you know it will always be Shanty Hill to us old folks.'

"The first coal opening was made where the monument stands at Seventh avenue and the D. & H. crossing.

"In 1832 there were no streets, one crude bridge over the river nearly opposite Trinity church and only a bridle path along the river. as early as 1827, we find these names—Lathrope, Poor, Sweet, Raynor, Marvin, Mills, Powderly, Johnson, Simpson, Nealon, Stott, Benjamin Dickson, Thomas, Moffitt, Pierce, Bowen, Scurry, Clark, Love, Gillespie—names that with many others later stand out in our history.

"Following the coal came the D. & H. and hand-in-hand progress was made despite floods and disastrous fires. In 1850, fire from the Parade Ground, now Memorial Park, destroyed 60 buildings north on Main and Church streets. In 1855, Bronson's Hotel, where you now find Woolworth's was destroyed, along with many other buildings. A troupe of show people, playing cards, were responsible for the fire.